



The Friends of the Bluefish River Fire House are raising donations to help restore the town's first fire house.

Friends Try to Breathe Life into Historic Building

By MORAG MACLACHLAN

On the heels of its one hundredth anniversary, Duxbury's oldest fire house is gearing up for a makeover.

Nancy Bennett of the Friends of the Bluefish River Fire House said the group formed in February in an attempt to raise funds to restore the historic building. In the early 1900s, the fire house was home to Engine Company One. It housed a pumper. Bennett said across the street from the fire house, a barn held horses that would pull the pumper to the fire.

"The building is in terrible condition," Bennett said. "And there did not appear to be any funds in the town budget for any work on it."

The building, constructed in 1906, is owned by the town. Originally built on the parcel of land that the Wright Building now sits on, the Wright family had the fire house moved to its current location on Washington Street in order to build a library on the property in 1908.

Bennett said the facility was used as a fire house until the late 1960s. After closing its doors, the structure housed an antique apparatus for nearly 20 years. That equipment was later moved and the old fire house has since become a storage facility for the harbormaster.

Bennett said the Friends applied for and received \$9,800 of Community Preservation Committee funds to be used for buying materials. The group is now focused on raising funds to pay for the repairs. Bennett said in-kind

services are welcome as well.

"David Cazeault of Cazeault Roofers donated the roof," Bennett said.

Another local contractor has offered a full crew for three days. Bennett hopes local painters will step up and help the group fix, reglaze and paint the fire house's windows.

"The more that's donated the better," Bennett said. "I think we'll need to raise \$20,000 in addition to the CPC funds."

The roof, siding, windows and doors will be replaced in order to restore the building to its original condition. Bennett thinks the renovations will take between three to four weeks to complete. She hopes to begin the repairs in late March or early April.

Fire Chief Kevin Nord hopes the restoration will be finished in enough time for a birthday celebration for the fire department.

"The Bluefish River Fire House is a snapshot of history," Nord said. "It was a very social place because the department depended on volunteerism."

Anyone interested in donating to the Friends of the Bluefish River Fire House can send donations to P.O. Box 1180, Duxbury, MA 02331. Bennett said anyone who provides funding, supplies or labor will be listed in a commemorative book.

Friends members include Bennett, Susanna Sheehan, Tony Kelso, Norman Tucker, Martha Himes, Barbara Kiley Sari Seewald and Andrew Carlton.